

Torrance Herald

Published Every Thursday by THE LOMITA-TORRANCE PUBLISHING CO. 1479 Marcelina Ave. Torrance, California

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Subscription Rates in Advance: Anywhere in Los Angeles County \$2.00 per year; Anywhere in U. S. outside of Los Angeles County \$3.00 per year; Canada and Other Foreign Countries \$4.00 per year; Single Copies 5c

OFFICIAL PAPER OF THE CITY OF TORRANCE

Published weekly at Torrance, California, and entered as second-class matter January 30, 1914, at the Postoffice at Torrance, California, under the Act of March 3, 1879.

THE HERALD'S PLATFORM FOR TORRANCE

- 1—Ornamental Lighting System. 2—Interchange of Freight Between P. E. and Santa Fe. 3—Western Avenue Bus Line. 4—Hollywood - Palos Verdes Parkway. 5—New School North of Carson St. 6—Aviation Field. 7—Co-operation of All Torrance People, Firms, Industries and Other Agencies, to Induce Torrance Workmen to Live in Torrance. 8—The conduct of All Local Affairs in a Spirit of Neighborly Friendliness and Constructive Co-operation to the End That the Peace and Prosperity of All May Be Encouraged by an Alert Civic Consciousness and Patriotism.

TORRANCE STARTS ON SUBSTANTIAL GROWTH

REASONABLE rents, low taxes, land at moderate prices, and the fact that Torrance industries are busier than they have been in almost three years are going to combine to bring on an unprecedented growth in Torrance during the next year.

This is the only conclusion that the person who studies local conditions today possibly can reach.

The settling-down process of rents and land prices here after the oil boom fortunately was completed just at a time when payrolls in Torrance industries started to climb. The curves now have met at a point which means encouragement to the man who works in Torrance but does not live here.

Work is plentiful. The Chamber of Commerce employment bureau, free to individuals and industries, is placing one Torrance resident a day in a job that suits his training and ability. This is only a start. The campaign for preference to local residents by employers has only begun. With all agencies actively working to push that campaign, under economic conditions that make living here reasonable and attractive to workmen, and with groups ready to build homes for sale at low prices and on moderate terms, Torrance should continue to grow steadily and with reasonable rapidity.

Builders and building supply concerns report a brisk movement in their trade. The number of homes now in process of construction will be greatly increased within the next few weeks.

Today the demand for dwellings in Torrance exceeds the supply. Every person who owns a vacant lot should consider the advisability of building a house. At no time during the past three years have conditions been more favorable for home-building in Torrance.

HAVE you noticed that the benches placed under the trees recently in Torrance parks are occupied most of the time? Why not put out a few more?

HELP FIREMEN'S PROGRAM AND SAVE MONEY

TORRANCE will do well to assist the Volunteer Fire Department in staging its demonstration and fire prevention parade on Saturday, Oct. 9.

The reasons that dictate this conclusion are not altogether intangible. At least one of them is based on financial considerations.

Possessed of a well-trained department and splendid fire apparatus, Torrance should enjoy a still lower fire insurance rate. Such a reduction is now being sought. The requests for an adjustment in the rates is based on the new fire apparatus. The request will be greatly strengthened by the demonstration the department is planning Oct. 9. If Torrance should win the Ince cup, offered to the small city department that does the most during the year toward fire prevention, the victory should add weight to this city's contention that an adjustment of insurance rates here is advisable. Let's help the firemen win the cup.

The One who forgot

By RUBY M. AYRES

BEGIN HERE TODAY

PETER LYSTER loses his memory through shell shock in France. Upon his return to London he fails to recognize

NAN MARRABY, the girl to whom he became engaged before he went away. Nan, broken-hearted, has returned home to care for her three motherless stepbrothers. Nan has seen Peter often since he came to stay with JOHN ARNOTT, at the home of Arnott's widowed sister, near the Marraby estate. But Peter has shown no signs of recognition. Driven to desperation by Peter's apparent indifference and her father's financial difficulties, Nan has agreed to marry.

HARLEY SEFTON, money lender, who has told her that Peter is also in his debt. By chance Peter learns the true state of affairs and he arranges with JOAN ENDICOTT, who is staying with Nan, to find out why Nan is going to marry Sefton. Their plans are only partially successful, but in a fight with Sefton Peter's memory is restored. He comes in the early evening to make amends to his sweetheart.

NOW GO ON WITH THE STORY

Mary's voice was shrill and lovely and she sang in too high a key, but there was a sort of pathos in the sound, as if in some corner of the little maid's heart there lurked romance with a capital letter.

Nan gave a half laugh that seemed to break and die in her throat. She was so nervous, she hardly knew what she was doing, but the little bit about the dreams all coming true seemed to strike home to her.

"This is a dream," she thought as she crossed the hall and opened the front door. "This is a dream, but one which will never come true."

And she went out and down the dark pathway to meet Peter.

"Nan..."

She felt rather than saw that his arms went out to her, and she shivered away with a little movement of fear.

"Oh, no... no," she said in a whisper.

She turned away from him toward the gate.

"Let us go out—I can't breathe," she said with a sort of wildness. He walked beside her silently till they were out in the road.

Everything was very still here—there was a faintly iridescent light as if somewhere behind the clouds a moon was shining, and when Nan looked at him Peter's face looked gray in the eerie light of it.

"I've so much to say to you," he began incoherently. "I don't know where to begin... I feel—I feel as if I've walked through the world blindfolded for the past weeks and that today—only today, someone has torn the bandage from my eyes."

He stopped suddenly—he stood before her.

"It was not play-acting; Nan," he said hoarsely. "I swear if I never speak again that it was not."

He was shaking all over; his voice was wrung with agitation.

Nan could not speak—unconsciously she put out her hand and caught at Peter to steady herself, and the next moment she was in his arms.

He held her to his heart as if he could never let her go. He spoke

before her.

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foolish, incoherent words of love, to which she listened like one in a dream. And all the time she kept telling herself that that was all it was—a dream—a dream; that she must keep her head, or she would die when the bitter awakening came. Presently, with an effort, she wrenched herself free.

"Oh, don't, please—please," she cried, and she fled into the wood now. Nan leaned her arms on the top bar and laid her head down on them with a dreadful feeling of faintness, and for a long moment neither of them spoke.

"If I raise my head, or look up, I shall find that he isn't there at all," she was telling herself despairingly. "I know that it's only what I've been imagining. Oh, how shall I bear it!"

And then she felt his hand on hers—felt the close pressure of his fingers and heard him speaking to her.

"You don't believe me, Nan, I know—and you've got to believe me. I don't know how to begin—I don't know what to say—it's as if I've been through a long illness. I'm so ashamed, but it hasn't been my fault. Oh, I beg of you to believe me."

"I know—I know," she spoke breathlessly. She hated that note of pain in his voice, but as yet she could do but little to help him.

"It takes some forgetting," she said in a stifled voice. "I will try—oh, I will—but you don't know how hard it's been... I thought I should have died myself with shame—

with remorse. Nan, you know how I loved you... We were to have been married when I came home."

He let her hand go suddenly and forced her to turn to him. The pale moonlight shone full on her face with its tortured eyes, and with a little stifled exclamation Peter put his hand over them, as if he could not bear to see their pain. He remembered her as so brave and plucky—why, even at the very last moment when they said goodbye before he went to France she had smiled at him with her little crooked smile, though her eyes had been drowned in tears.

Then all at once the tears came to Nan with overwhelming relief, washing the last trace of bitterness and hardness from her heart.

Peter kept his arms round her tightly; he did not speak, but from time to time he kissed her hair and the little bit of face which was all he could see, and the slim trembling hand that clutched the lapel of his coat as if even now she was afraid to let him go.

He had never known Nan to break down like this before, and it cut him to the heart. She was always so cheery and brave—it told him only too surely what she had suffered.

AND then at last she raised her head and tried to laugh.

"Have I quite drowned you?" she asked tremulously. "I'm so sorry, but... She tried to steady her eyes and tried to straighten her ruffled hair.

"It's a good thing you didn't come in, after all," she said brokenly. "We should have had all the house about our ears by now if you had."

"And you can forgive me. I deserve it so little, Nan."

"I haven't been your fault—but even now I don't understand—this morning in the wood—" Her blue

eyes sought his face jealously. "You hadn't remembered me, then, Peter?"

"I had—that was why I couldn't trust myself. Nan, there is so much I must tell you—first of all I saw Sefton tonight—I went to the Rex House to see him, and I got the truth out of him. His voice grew grim. 'A bully is nearly always a coward, I suppose,' he said. 'At any rate, I made him tell me the whole story... He drew a hard breath. 'I don't think you will ever be troubled with him again.'"

"What do you mean? You haven't hurt him?" Oh, Peter... you don't know—you don't understand what harm he can do to you—to all of us."

"He can do nothing—he's a liar and a coward, and Nan—that little friend of yours—Mrs. Endicott, isn't her name?—"

"Why, yes," said Nan in amazement. "But you don't know her—"

He laughed. "I do—" and then he told her of his chance meeting with Joan.

She drew away from him, the blood rushing to her face.

"Then it was Joan—and if you hadn't seen her you wouldn't ever have known—"

He caught her hand.

"I should—what she told me was only what I'd always really known at the back of my mind. At first I couldn't understand why it was that you worried me so—I kept thinking about you and wanting to see you—I couldn't settle to anything when I was not with you—I

came over here scores of times when you knew nothing about it. Nan, and walked up and down past the house, I hated Arnott because I knew he wanted you, too—"

"And yet you wanted me to marry him—"

"That was all pretense—I didn't understand... and when I heard about Sefton... His voice changed. "Nan, you never cared for that brute—swear that you never cared for him."

"If you knew how I hate him—if you knew how sometimes I felt as if I could have killed him... but father owed him money—and he told me that... that..."

"That I owed him money, too? Yes, I know that—but it's all a lie. He laughed ruefully. "Nan, I've got one tiny score up against you there—because you believed it."

"I know, I'm ashamed that I did—but he was so sure—and I was so desperately unhappy—"

"My poor girl!"

"She bit her lip hard. "If you say things like that I shall cry again—"

"You shall never shed another tear as long as you live."

She smiled and shook her head. "Isn't that rather a big promise? But I love you for it—and, Peter..."

"She pulled at the little chain round her neck and showed him his ring. "That is where it has been all the time," she said, shyly. "And you asked Mr. Arnott..."

Peter scowled.

"Arnott is to blame for all this—he ought to have told me the truth from the beginning—"

"He tried to—he is not to blame at all; he has been most kind. "Are you trying to make me jealous?"

"You know I am not—but go on, Peter, I want to hear so much more; how did you—when did you—oh, you know what I mean."

"What are you thinking?" Peter asked. "You don't believe me yet—do you?—you are not quite sure."

He moved closer to her.

"What is it?" he asked passionately. "Oh, my dear! What is it?"

Nan's lips quivered.

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"It's—it's—oh, she said, with a sudden burst of very real anguish, 'if you haven't loved me all this time, how can you really love me now? There will always be those months and weeks when I wasn't anything to you—when I didn't count at all.'"

It seemed a long time before Lyster answered her. He stood there in the half-light looking past her into the wood, and there was a deep sadness in his face.

Then he said slowly, as if he were carefully choosing his words: "I don't know how to answer that question, dear, but I have always loved you—I must always have loved you, Nan, because no other woman has ever interested me."

She did not raise her eyes; there was still something she must say. "There is Mrs. Mears..."

she said in a whisper.

There was a moment of amazed silence, then Peter laughed. He laughed with such frank surprise

and tender scorn that tears of relief stung Nan's eyes.

"You're not serious," he said. "Why, I never gave her a serious thought! She was very good to me, but she always talked about her husband, poor chap! If ever a woman loved a man I should say that she loved him."

"Mr. Sefton told me—" Nan began hurriedly; but Peter stopped her.

"I forbid you to speak that man's name. He never spoke the truth in his life. I shall take good care to let everyone know how he tried to thrash Claude, and that's not a pleasant thing for a man to have up against him!"

"You forget that father owes him money. He'll be more bitter than ever now."

"Your father owes him nothing. Nan, have you forgotten that I'm not quite a pauper?"

She raised her startled eyes to his face.

"You mean that you—you paid him?" she asked in a whisper.

"I would do a great deal more than that for you." He took her face in the hollow of his hands.

"Nan, I shall never be able to make it up to you—if I live to be a hundred—for these last weeks."

She closed her eyes.

"I want to forget them. I don't want ever to think of them again."

Always they were slipping into the background; already the dread-

ful feeling of happiness irrevocably lost was less acute.

She laid her cheek against Peter's arm with a little sigh.

"I ought to be going," she said. "Joan will wonder where I am. I never told her I was coming out."

"You're not going back till you say that you've forgiven me—till you say that everything is just as it was; only better—that you love me quite as well—that you never cared a straw for Sefton, or John Arnott." His voice grew suddenly grave. "Nan, supposing you'd married somebody else, and I had not found out till too late—that you—"

He put his arms round her with sudden fierceness. "I think it would have killed me," he said passionately.

Nan put her arms round his neck and laid her cheek to his. Somehow it seemed quite easy to let him know now how much she cared. She marvelled that in the old days she had been so shy and undemonstrative.

"And darling—when will you marry me?" Peter asked in a whisper.

She stirred uneasily.

"There are the boys; I can't leave them."

"I don't ask you to—except for a honeymoon; you can't expect me to take them all along with us?" he submitted whimsically.

She laughed.

"I don't think I should mind even that—if we were together."

She raised her head suddenly. "That was someone calling—it must be Joan... Come—we must go back."

He caught her to him and kissed her again—a long kiss that swept away the last doubt and shadow between them; then they went back down the road hand in hand.

Joan met them at the gate—her small face looked pale and startled in the faint moonlight.

"Oh, thank goodness!" she said when she saw Nan. "I thought—"

Then she recognized Peter, and drew a long sigh of relief.

"And this, I suppose," she said breathlessly, "is the end of the story?"

Peter Lyster looked at Nan—looked that brought a lump to Joan's throat, and made her long for the adored Tim more than ever, if such a thing was possible.

"No," he said steadily. "It's only the beginning."

THE END

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